

What is claimed is:

1. An image forming apparatus comprising:

an image carrier having a surface movable in a preselected direction while carrying a toner image on said surface;

a movable body having a surface movable in a same direction as the surface of said image carrier in contact with said surface of said image carrier, thereby forming a nip;

driving means for exerting a force that pulls a portion of said movable body contacting said image carrier out of the nip;

image transferring means for transferring the toner image from said image carrier to a movable body side at the nip; and

control means for controllably driving said image carrier and said movable body;

wherein said control means starts driving said movable body after driving said image carrier.

2. The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein toner images of different colors are sequentially formed on said image carrier and sequentially transferred from said image carrier to the movable body side one above the other, forming a full-color image.

3. The apparatus as claimed in claim 2, wherein said

image carrier comprises a plurality of image carriers each for carrying a toner image of a particular color, and wherein said movable body is movable in contact with said plurality of image carriers.

4. The apparatus as claimed in claim 3, further comprising:

sensing means for sensing the toner images transferred to said movable body; and

correcting means for correcting, based on an output of said sensing means, a relative positional deviation between the toner images formed on said image carriers;

wherein a reference toner image pattern is formed on each of said image carriers and then transferred to said movable body.

5. The apparatus as claimed in claim 4, wherein said movable body comprises an endless belt.

6. An image forming method comprising the steps of:

moving a surface of an image carrier, which carries a toner image thereon, in a preselected direction;

moving a surface of a movable body in a same direction as the surface of said image carrier in contact with said surface of said image carrier, thereby forming a nip;

exerting a force that pulls a portion of said movable body contacting said image carrier out of the nip;

transferring the toner image from said image carrier

to a movable body side at the nip; and

controllably driving said image carrier and said movable body such that said movable body starts moving after said image carrier has started moving.